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SUBJECT: Island Life and Leadership Tourism: Hainan's Political Landscape

¶1. SUMMARY: Though far from the center of power in Beijing, leaders of the southern island province of Hainan have gone on to bigger and better things, as in the case of former Hainan Party Secretary and current Vice Premier Wang Qishan. Today it is home to several leaders with promotion potential, including Governor Luo Baoming and provincial Standing Committee Member Lou Yangsheng. END SUMMARY.

Catching the Wave -- What It Takes to Advance

¶2. What does it take to move into positions of power in Hainan? The right resume doesn't hurt; Haikou and Sanya party secretaries routinely find themselves promoted to concurrent membership on the Hainan Communist Party Standing Committee. Hainan's current Standing Committee consists of no fewer than three current or former Haikou or Sanya party secretaries: Chen Ci, currently at Haikou; Jiang Zelin, currently at Sanya; and former Haikou Party Secretary Wang Weilu.

¶3. Though not necessarily widespread, experience with petroleum issues may be a factor in the selection of at least some Hainan officials. Vice Governor Li Guoliang, who arrived in Hainan in 2004 to oversee Sinopec's refinery project on the island, was one of three new vice governors selected in 2007. Current Party Secretary Wei Liucheng, was a former President of China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC).

The Next Party Secretary?

¶4. Current Provincial Party Secretary Wei Liucheng will retire in 2011, opening a vacancy with no clear frontrunner for now. Predicting who will move up to fill leadership positions in Hainan is difficult due to Beijing's common practice of appointing officials from elsewhere in China. Among the current governor and six vice governors, four have lived in the province less than six years. Former Hainan Party Secretary and current Vice Premier Wang Qishan was a Beijing-directed transplant, as are current Party Secretary Wei Liucheng and a number of former vice governors.

Who Has What It Takes? -- The Governor

¶5. There is the possibility that current Governor Luo Baoming -- who appears to have a good reputation for competence -- could advance, possibly to the post of provincial party secretary, though he has only been in his present position since 2007. Luo has been in Hainan, however, since his transfer from Tianjin to be the island's deputy provincial party secretary in 2001. Luo is

advantaged by his experience as party secretary of Tianjin's Communist Youth League (CYL) from 1981 to 1992, time that likely links him to Hu Jintao's CYL power center.

#### The Mayors

¶6. Mayors of Hainan's two major cities are generally candidates for promotion to municipal party secretary positions, though current Haikou Mayor Xu Tangxian -- who will be 58 at the end of his term in 2012 -- is probably too old to be promoted. Current Sanya mayor Wang Yong, however, is in a better position; he is now only 52 and has previous experience working with the Communist Youth League in Shandong Province.

#### And More

¶7. Another noteworthy official with CYL experience is Lou Yangsheng, the Standing Committee member in charge of the powerful Organization Department of the Hainan Communist Party Committee. Lou, who came to Hainan only in 2009, is only 50 years old and is the former party secretary of Zhejiang Province's Communist Youth League.

¶8. For more information on the portfolios of senior Hainan officials, see ConGen Guangzhou's Communities@State blog at: <http://www.intelink.gov/communities/state/southchinasez/>

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